

Summer Exercise is Good for Your Back

Summer is the perfect time of year to engage in appropriate outdoor exercises to rehabilitate your back. Most types of exercise can be done year-round, but the sunlight and green grass of summer can be great encouragement to get out and make the best of a pleasant day. Here are some suggestions of how summer can give your exercise routine a boost:

Swimming

Consider the summer a time to get out to your local lakes, rivers, and outdoor pools for swimming and water exercise, which tend to be especially gentle exercise for your joints and back.

Water therapy exercise is especially helpful where a land-based exercise program is not possible due to the intensity of pain, decreased bone density, disability or other factors. As such, water therapy is a versatile exercise and particularly good for people with conditions such as:

- Osteoarthritis
- Advanced osteoporosis (with susceptibility to and/or pain from fracture)
- Muscle strain or tears

In addition to those conditions, water therapy is frequently

recommended as one form of exercise therapy to treat those with diabetes as well as individuals with high blood pressure. Both conditions can improve and become more manageable with aquatic exercise.

All of these conditions can make it uncomfortable or painful to exercise on a hard or even padded surface, or while standing. Water provides a much gentler, welcoming environment.

Biking

For many with low back pain, biking is a good low-impact form of exercise that is gentle on the lower back and less jarring to the spine than many other forms of aerobic exercise, such as jogging or aerobics class.

Some people with certain back conditions often feel more

Dr. Mark W. Cafagna, DC

Address

Cafagna Chiropractic

456 E. Mission Road
Suite 100
San Marcos, CA 92069

Telephone Number

760-410-2373

Qualifications

Graduated From: Palmer College of Chiropractic

Years in Practice: 30

Treatments

- Chiropractic Adjustments
- Ultrasound
- EMS
- Deep Tissue Massage
- Spinal Axial Decompression
- Orthotics
- Trigger Point Therapy

"Do what you do so well that people would want to come back and tell others." ~ Walt Disney

comfortable in the forward-leaning position of sitting on a bicycle seat and leaning forward on the handlebars. Lumbar spinal stenosis is an example of a condition in which most people feel better in a forward leaning position.

For those with a low back condition in which a reclining position feels better, a reclining bike, also called a recumbent bike, may be preferable. Lumbar degenerative disc disease is an example of such a condition.

Yoga and Tai Chi

Yoga and Tai Chi are excellent low-impact activities for those with back or neck pain. In the summer, classes are often held in parks or on beaches.

Hatha yoga — the most commonly practiced form — affords the practitioner a mental state of mind that is ready for meditation, which in turn reduces stress and enhances mood. These mental benefits play an important role in the overall healing benefits of yoga.

Tai Chi is a form of exercise that has recently been gaining popularity as a way to relieve and/or manage back and neck pain. It is easy to associate Tai Chi with groups of people in parks or gyms moving slowly and deliberately in synchronization.

Unlike yoga, Tai Chi involves a greater degree of movement and, unlike many types of aerobic exercise (such as running), does not involve any jarring motions that create impact on the spine. It is a slow and deliberate, flowing movement of the body.

Exercise Walking

Parks, woodlands, or new neighborhoods are places you can explore by taking summer walks a few times a week. If walking is hard on your hips or lower back, consider adding trekking poles to your walking routine.

There are many inherent health benefits from a regular routine of exercise walking, such as:

- Strengthens muscles in the feet, legs, hips, and torso;
- Nourishes the spinal structures;
- Improves flexibility and posture.

Safety Tips

It is especially important to stay hydrated when exercising in the summer. Drink 1 to 2 cups of water per hour to replenish your fluid level while outside. Drink an additional 1 to 2 cups per hour if you are actively exercising, even if it is swimming.

It's also important to prevent injury by including a 10-minute warm up and cool down as part of any workout. Warm up with light aerobic activity and cool down with stretching.

Read more about summer exercise routines and benefits:

<http://www.spine-health.com/blog/summer-exercise-good-your-back?>

Talk to Dr. Cafagna about specific questions related to your unique health situation.

**Contact Dr. Cafagna
to learn more or schedule an appointment**

760-410-2373

<http://www.spine-health.com/doctor/chiropractor/mark-cafagna-san-marcos-ca>